

Aug. 15, 1869

(1804-1894) Ferdinand Vicomte de Lesseps
French diplomat & engineer. Born in
Versailles. Evaluated the scheme for
the Suez Canal (1854) which was
begun in 1860 and opened

Aug. 15, 1869. Commenced the
Panama Canal in 1881, but funds
for the maintenance of the work
were not forthcoming; the management
was charged with fraud; and De Lesseps

was sentenced to imprisonment & fine.
The sentence was never enforced

He received an English knighthood and
the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honor for
his work in the Suez Canal.